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homemakers' chat
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Monday, February 1, 1943

SUBJECT: "MORE FUEL-SAVING TIPS." Information from scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and officials of the Office of Price Administration.

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Tomorrow is the day the groundhog traditionally comes out to look for his shadow. But whether he sees it or not, you will be wise To play safe and count on a lot more winter. Housing engineers of the Department of Agriculture and officials of the Office of Price Administration are urging everyone to keep on conserving heat...not to forget the wartime fuel shortage, even if February sunshine begins to feel like spring. One look at the calendar will remind you that almost half the winter is yet to come. And fuel for heating, whether it's oil, coal, gas, or fuel wood, is scarce in many parts of the country.

Storm windows also are scarce in many places--that is, the regular permanent storm windows made with sashes of milled lumber. But have you heard about the victory storm window? It is a sash-less window designed to meet the shortage. The victory storm window is simply a pane of glass you place over the frame of the window and then fasten on with strips of the kind of molding used for picture frames. To keep air from filtering in between the molding and the frame, run an all-weather tape around the edge of the glass. The cost of these victory windows is about 2 dollars each.

Of course, the victory storm windows will not take the place of the permanent kind. If you can get a storm window with a regular sash, it is better than this temporary wartime measure.

By the way, the amount of fuel storm windows save depends a good deal on where you live. The longer and colder the winter, the greater the saving

in fuel. For example, storm windows can save considerably more fuel in a house way up in Maine than in a house in Virginia or farther south where winters are shorter and milder. The housing engineers who devised the victory storm window have estimated the fuel these windows can save. They estimate savings of fuel oil this way: Each window of average size in a house in Portland, Maine, will save during the winter 5 and two-thirds gallons of oil...in Boston the savings will be 4 and three-quarters gallons...in New York 4 and one-third gallons...and in Washington, D. C. 3 and one-third gallons. Estimates on savings of coal work out this way: Each storm window in a house in Portland, Maine, saves 93 pounds of coal...in Boston 78 pounds of coal...in New York 71 pounds...in Washington, D. C. 57 pounds.

Even this late in the season you can arrange many little things around the house that will save considerable fuel and add to your comfort for the rest of the winter. For example, you can put curtains and shades to work helping to keep rooms warm. They can do a good deal toward keeping in heat and keeping out cold and drafts. If your living room opens off a front hall, hang drapes or heavy curtains across the inside of the door, or across an open doorway leading into the room. If you make these drapes lightproof and have lightproof shades or curtains at the windows also - you can have the warmest and most comfortable room in the house fitted up for Blackouts.

Curtains and shades at windows can help save fuel, too. Draw window shades at night--and on windy days, too. Window panes are cold except when the sun shines on them. Window drapes or curtains drawn across the windows keep heat in the room from passing out through the cold pane, help cut off drafts, and make anyone sitting near a window more comfortable.

Some walls are cold. A wall hanging like a tapestry, or a rug, or even a blanket helps keep the cold from penetrating the room.

If cold air gets in under the door, of course, the permanent cure is good weather-stripping and the right kind of threshold. But a temporary remedy for the rest of the winter is a small rug or mat placed against the door to keep drafts off the floor. This applies especially to a front door leading to the outside of the house.

If floors are cold, newspapers folded under rugs help. So do the protecting mats sold for use under rugs.

Finally, the experts say again that you save considerable fuel by leaving your sleeping rooms unheated. Bedrooms back in Grandmother's day were cold, and the family met the problem by wearing warm night clothes and loose bed socks and dressing and undressing in one of the warm rooms of the house. Many families today are doing the same thing and considering it no hardship--dressing and undressing in the bathroom. Keep the register in the bedroom closed and covered, and keep a mat on the floor against the door so that the cold air won't get out into the rest of the house.

If you have a fireplace, use it at a time when it can give the most comfort. That is usually after the evening meal when the family gathers in the living room. The Department of Agriculture has a free bulletin that will help you use your fireplace to best advantage. This is called "Fireplaces and Chimneys," No.1889. A postcard to the U.S.Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. will bring you that bulletin--as long as the free supply lasts.

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